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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the progress achieved in the fields of vocational and management training as well as the contributions made by the technical services of the International Labor Office to the efforts of developing countries. The paper is organized in five sections. The first section describes cooperation between management training institutions; it provides some general principles for this type of cooperation, as well as ideas for organization and follow-up of programs. The second section provides examples of technical cooperation between developing countries in the field of vocational training. They include the Inter-American Centre for Research and Documentation on Vocational Training, the Asian and Pacific Skill Development Program, and the Inter-African Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. In the third section, factors favorable or unfavorable to technical cooperation between developing countries in the field of vocational training are discussed. The fourth section describes measures for the reinforcement of technical cooperation between developing countries, and the final remarks contained in the fifth and last section reinforce the benefits of cooperation. (KC)

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TRAINING POLICIES

Discussion Paper No. 9

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING

by
Julio Bergerie

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TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING

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TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING

1. There is no longer any need to justify the basic principle of co-operation between training and management institutions on the one hand, and between vocational training institutions on the other, as both types of institution have already shown that they believe in co-operation. Their leaders indeed face an ever-increasing demand while, in many instances, find that they lack the necessary means to cope with it. They well know that no institution can be expected to reach a high technical standard if it is working alone. As a result, they are trying to expand this type of co-operation, which has already proven its worth and, at the same time, to find new formulas which will enable them to better satisfy present needs and meet future challenges.

2. These concerns are reflected in the programmes of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). For a number of years, ILO operational programmes have included a number of activities specifically aimed at supporting initiatives taken by different groups of developing countries with a view to extending and systematising their mutual collaboration.

3. This paper succinctly describes the progress achieved in the fields of vocational and management training as well as the contributions made by the technical services of the International Labour Office to the efforts of the developing countries.

I. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS

4. During the past two decades, management training institutions in most countries have made substantial progress in developing their professional competence, their human and material resources, their links with the social environment and the range of services provided. They have all collaborated in this effort. Today it is increasingly recognised that management staff need to be trained in new skills, using methods adapted to local conditions. The institutions are aware of the vast amount of management experience which has accumulated in many countries in the world and recognise the advantages to be gained from this situation. This is all the more necessary as most of them are of medium-size, with only moderate financial resources. In short, these are the main reasons which have incited many management development institutions to seek the backing of other similar bodies within the framework of co-operation agreements.

5. About three years ago, the ILO management development programme sent questionnaires to some 50 of these institutions requesting their views on the ways in which direct co-operation with other institutions in the same field might be achieved. An analysis of the replies received showed that institutions all over the world have adopted the practice of sharing their experiences through technical workshops, fellowships for the further training of their staff in foreign countries, the use of foreign consultants in specific fields, and the dissemination of publications. However, it was noted that there were only a few examples of joint initiatives to discuss common problems, to exchange personnel or establish co-ordinated services, for example in the field of documentation. Many institutions had only limited information on projects which were of particular interest to them or on training or information material which they could have easily requested from other institutions. Replies also showed few instances of systematic co-operation activities aimed at solving certain problems whose order of priority had been established by several of the institutions.

6. These findings prompted the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the ILO to launch an inter-regional project for the promotion of efficient collaboration between management development institutions. During an initial period, from 1977 to 1980, specific types of co-operation were organised within the context of this project, namely: a preliminary survey of attitudes to, and needs for, co-operation, individual contacts with a number of regional and inter-regional organisations interested in the promotion of co-operation in the field of management; publication of a trilingual international directory of institutions and sources of information; and the outline of an information system centered on the needs and possibilities of co-operation between institutions. A team of editors affiliated to a number of institutions is at present writing an international guidebook on the management of management development institutions.

A. Global meeting on co-operation among management development institutions

7. Co-operation can be encouraged by one international organisation; however, it is the directors of the interested institutions who know their own needs best and who can take the decision to collaborate with others. This idea was the basis of an international meeting on co-operation between management development institutions held at ILO Headquarters in Geneva in December 1980. Fifty national management development institutions and 17 regional or inter-regional organisations were represented by their directors. Considerable interest was shown by a number of institutions from developing countries who agreed to pay their own participative costs, so that more institutions from the less developed countries might also participate. In addition, some of the institutions which were unable to attend sent messages of support to the meeting and expressed the wish that they be associated with the resulting initiatives for co-operation.

8. During both the preparatory stages of the meeting and its proceedings in Geneva, the institutions submitted a significant number of proposals, either of a general or of a specific nature, on the organisation of co-operation and the demand which, within an order of priority, should be dealt with during the next three to five years. The proposals are summarised below.

B. Some general principles

9. In order to be successful, institutions should not engage in co-operation projects without being certain that they deal with a priority matter. A periodic evaluation of an institution's strong and weak points will permit both a definition of its priorities in terms of needs and of the fields in which it can assist others. Even those institutions which initially act as donors, may benefit from collaborating with others, and co-operation should therefore be considered as a medium for conducting mutually beneficial, multiple exchanges.

10. As co-operation has to be based on understanding and trust, personal contact should be encouraged, especially between professional staff working on joint projects. However, simple methods of co-operation should be used before complex ones, since they allow easier evaluation of the needs and wishes of each partner and of the level of quality to be reached. Methods of co-operation should be diversified and combined in different fashions; however, some institutions show an unfortunate tendency to confine themselves to a few traditional methods.

11. Regional co-operation has a number of advantages. The Asian Productivity Organisation (APO) and the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) are two examples of successful activities in this connection. However, activities should not be limited to one region only; on the contrary, regional co-operation should be open to world-wide influence and lend itself to inter-regional activities to facilitate exchanges between all the large regional groups of countries throughout the world.

12. It is equally important to overcome administrative or sectoral barriers which can oppose co-operation. In fact, there are several kinds of management development institution, many of them going under other names and working in very well-defined fields under the auspices of different ministries in a given country. In many instances, administrative and sectoral barriers are cited as hindering institutional co-operation. Nevertheless, there is a need to improve the co-operation between industrial institutes and university schools or departments of business administration, as well as between management development institutes serving public or private institutions. In this connection, the directors of several institutions have noted that a number of opportunities for co-operation at a national level have so far been neglected, a fact which impedes the adequate use of the total resources of a country.

C. Fields of priority

13. Prior to the meeting in Geneva, participating institutions were requested to designate those fields in which they would like to increase co-operation. On the basis of their replies, an agenda was prepared which included the following topics: training in public corporations; development of small enterprises; increase in and measurement of productivity; data processing systems in project management; improvement of the administration and working methods of management development institutions, and particular problems encountered in some sectoral fields.

14. For example, the subjects of discussion noted below were chosen for their relevance by the directors of institutions from two of the high priority fields.

15. As regards management training in public enterprises, management development institutions were in favour of the following objectives:

(a) a better co-ordination of international programmes undertaken by a number of different agencies;

(b) a better co-ordination of information systems dealing with the management of public enterprises which have been developed in several countries;

(c) development of a systematic exchange of teaching materials at the regional and inter-regional levels;

(d) development and implementation of joint programmes for management staff in both the public and the private sectors, in order to improve co-operation between the two sectors;

(e) strengthening of experience exchange and of active co-operation as regards performance improvement approaches carried out in the public enterprise sector in various countries.

16. As regards the improvement of management and work methods in management institutions, the following specific ideas for action were formulated:

(a) organisation of workshops for directors, focusing on strategies and the management of institutions;

(b) audit of individual institutions, to be followed by an exchange of the results within groups of institutions;

(c) a substantial increase in the exchange of documents on such matters as policy, legal provision, manuals or technical reports;

(d) joint definition and organisation of staff development programmes;

(e) preparation of guidelines on the organisation and operation of management information systems and library services in management institutions and on the use of services of existing computerised bibliographic data bases in the management and related fields;

(f) exchange of documents on management, programming and financial and control methods used by well-managed institutions.

D. Information on co-operation

17. It is practically impossible to find the right partners without thorough knowledge of the work being undertaken by other institutions, their objectives and their attitudes towards co-operation. Consequently, the ILO has established a service for information exchange called the Management Development Referral Service (MDRS). This service, based on the demand for co-operation between management development institutions, was started in 1981 following the international meeting in Geneva.

18. The permanent secretariat of this service is situated within the Management Development Branch of the ILO, which deals, among other things, with information supplied by MDRS members and, on this basis, publishes periodical bulletins for distribution. Affiliation to this service is open primarily to all institutions in developing countries; however, institutions from industrialised countries are also accepted. The Bulletin publishes short profiles of member institutions, abstracts or résumés of booklets, annual reports, periodical news sheets, teaching materials, etc., as well as information on co-operation needs and offers.

19. For an initial period, the service in question will be free of charge. Once it is well established, it may supply information on a fee-charging basis, depending on the demand. Inasmuch as the service will mainly deal with information supplied by its members, the quality and quantity of the data published in the Bulletin will depend essentially on their commitment to supply information which is both interesting and useful.

E. Organisation of co-operation and follow-up

20. The international meeting showed that the directors of institutions enthusiastically supported the idea of co-operation. It seemed, from the very beginning, that co-operation should be taken up by the institutions themselves and that it should be subject to direct agreements between two or more institutions grouped together for this purpose. It is to be anticipated

that the collaboration of a third party, such as an international organisation, could be requested if there is need for technical or financial support. However, in most cases, every institution wishing to collaborate should budget the necessary funds for this purpose, within its own financial limits.

21. In many instances, the type of collaboration involving several institutions from one or more regions may encounter organisational problems. According to a recommendation adopted by the international meeting, the ILO Management Development Branch, as well as other regional or international organisations interested in ths subject, should assist in the implementation of the different types of collaboration envisaged, prepare and propose appropriate arrangements to that end, and make certain that existing institutonal structures are used to the full.

22. The ILO Management Development Programme was responsible for the follow-up of the international meeting in Geneva. It implements some of the suggested activities, transmits appropriate suggestions to other organisations, and establishes working contacts with agencies that are willing to support co-operation between institutions.

II. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

23. International technical co-operation in the field of vocational training has progressed a great deal over the last few years. At the outset, this kind of co-operation was primarily intended to help countries cope with the demand for skilled labour, especially in the mechanical industries and in the repairs and maintenance services of other industrial sectors. More recently, when the developing countries first drew-up industrial development plans, several of them decided to establish national training schemes. Consequently, international technical co-operation was called upon to assist in defining the legal framework for training and in installing various services such as planning, programming, instructor training, preparation of teaching materials, etc., which had become necessary in order to carry out increasingly large training programmes.

24. This growth in the kind of technical co-operation requested by developing ccuntries had a determining influence on its development, and it was in response to the new needs that Technical Co-operation between Developing Countries (TCDC) was intended to favour exchanges of experience and thought on vocational training within the three continents, Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. It should be emphasised that TCDC was not conceived as a substitute but rather as a supplementary instrument of regional co-ordination which would not hinder the development of a North/South type of co-operation. In fact, this co-operation remains necessary if one bears in mind the considerable vocational training needs in the developing countries.

25. This new trend characterised itself within the International Labour Organisation by the establishment of regional co-ordination centres which exchange experiences and carry out research for appropriate vocational training techniques, their operation based on close collaboration between member countries. Thus the Inter-American Centre for Research and Documentation on Vocational Training (CINTERFOR), the Inter-African Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CIADFOR) and the Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP) were established.

A. The Inter-American Centre for Research and Documentation on Vocational Training (CINTERFOR)

26. The first step towards creating a tool for regional co-operation in the field of vocational training was taken by the Seventh Conference of American States Members of the ILO (Buenos Aires, April 1961). The main objectives of the Centre are still valid today, i.e.: to contribute to policy making and to the development of training systems; to promote a permanent and active co-operation between national training organisations; to encourage fruitful relations between training bodies and those institutions responsible for labour, education and economic and social planning, in order to contribute to the improvement of the employment situation.

27. Apart from the main objectives, the following tasks were assigned to the Centre:

(a) undertake research into and studies of the problems related to the development of human resources in the Latin American and Caribbean countries, particularly those connected with the planning, administration, organisation and evaluation of vocational training;

(b) participate, when requested by national institutions, in the preparation and implementation of their training plans and programmes and in the development of teaching materials;

(c) facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences by organising seminars, technical meetings and working parties on subjects and problems of common interest to the countries of the region;

(d) gather and distribute existing documentation on vocational training in Latin America, to the Caribbean countries and other parts of the world; provide technical assistance to national institutions to enable them to create and organise their own documentation services;

(e) promote technical and managerial staff training in national institutions by organising further training courses, seminars and on-the-job training.

28. The Director-General of the ILO is ultimately responsible for the operation of the Centre and appoints the director. However, at the time of its creation, it was agreed that a permanent and direct link at the highest level was necessary between the Centre and the national bodies of the countries of the region; a Technical Committee was therefore established to actively participate in the management of the Centre's activities. The Committee consists of representatives of all the countries of the region. It meets on an annual basis in order to outline the programme's activities and to evaluate their implementation. It is also responsible for examining the Centre's budget and for establishing the criteria for the voluntary contributions, in cash or in kind, made by each member of CINTERFOR to ensure the implementation of its programme.

29. The Centre's staff consists of a small number of vocational training specialists and locally-recruited officials. However, since the professional staff cannot attend to the great variety of problems faced by the region's national organisations, CINTERFOR uses a laudable and flexible method of recruitment; it employs short-term consultants or uses ILO experts attached to national technical co-operation projects. One of the essential

characteristics of the Centre is to obtain the collaboration of specialists from national institutions, who are detached to CINTERFOR to help in the implementation of specific projects, and to organise national working parties whose activities are integrated with CINTERFOR's various projects.

30. Apart from these service contributions, the importance and quality of which should be emphasised, CINTERFOR's finances come from several sources. From the beginning, the main sources of finance have been the ILO, the UNDP and member countries themselves. The budget for the 1982-83 biennium, estimated at US$1,500,000 comprises the following: 40 per cent from voluntary contributions in cash from the member States, 40 per cent from the ILO and 20 per cent from the UNDP. Furthermore, the Centre has been entrusted on several occasions with the implementation of some large-scale projects such as: a project for skill certification financed by the Federal Republic of Germany, and other projects, financed by Sweden and the Netherlands that deal with women's training. Finally, in 1981, the Government of Venezuela signed an agreement with the ILO, under which an amount of US$770,000 was deposited with the ILO for the finance of a CINTERFOR project to reinforce the vocational training structures in Central American and Caribbean countries.

31. If technical co-operation between developing countries is to be conceived as an exchange of knowledge, techniques and services between the countries concerned - reinforced by the joint implementation of practical activities or research - it would seem essential for it to be able to rely on both a network and a central secretariat which would co-ordinate the activities of the whole organisation. CINTERFOR functions along the following lines: with its headquarters in Montevideo, the Centre motivates and co-ordinates the implementation of the programme of activities adopted by the Technical Committee, with the participation of the national training bodies that constitute the network. Experience shows that the results obtained by the established network are measured, not only in terms of the outcome of the numerous projects undertaken, but also in terms of the increasingly close relations that have developed between the national training bodies, their directors and their higher technical staff, as well as the increased circulation of all kinds of technical knowledge between the various parts of the network.

32. The action taken may be categorised as follows:

(a) Studies and research: These were mostly aimed at solving practical problems such as the reform of apprenticeships, the implementation of certification, the organisation of programmes for sectoral training (the production and distribution of electricity, the building industry, foundries, etc.) or the financing of training, together with tax concessions to encourage companies to train their employees. However, a number of studies have endeavoured to consider such problems as the relations between education and work or the attitudes of workers towards vocational training.

(b) Exchange of experiences: Since 1964, about 200 technical meetings, seminars and working parties, covering a vast range of subjects, have been organised. Generally, the goal of these meetings is either to evaluate previously compiled studies in order to find workable solutions to various problems, or to evaluate the results obtained by each training body during the implementation of a specific training programme or of new techniques applied to training activities during their initial or further stages.

(c) Further training of institutional staff: The techniques which were found to be the most effective during the exchange of experiences are imparted through courses or brief training sessions. Over a period of some fifteen years, about 3,000 people (executives, managers, directors of programmes or training centres, teaching staff) were thus able to acquire new knowledge, techniques or methods which could be applied to their daily activities.

(d) Information: Two services (documentation and editorial publishing) ensure that information is exchanged by the region's training bodies. The information service has compiled a bibliographic stock of some 18,000 documents; it prepares summaries that are, on the one hand, incorporated in the ILO's information system and, on the other, distributed to the national training bodies of the region; it provides technical assistance to the documentation services of the said bodies; and, finally, it prepares working aids that can be used by all of these services, such as a specialised thesaurus and numerous catalogues and indices. As for the editorial and publishing service, it prepares all the documents resulting from the Centre's various activities (surveys, monographs, reports, periodical bulletins, etc.), and provides its assistance free of charge to the region's national training bodies. The Centre regularly publishes six different series of documents as well as about thirty books a year.

(e) Technical co-operation: The Centre provides direct technical assistance at the specific request of a particular institution. However, given its limited resources, the Centre can only provide immediate and short-term services. In fact, it often acts solely as an intermediary to find the institution within the network capable of supplying the services requested. In general, the Centre acts as an adviser to the national training bodies, for instance when the latter are preparing traditional-type co-operation projects or recruiting competent experts to work on these projects. The Centre also offers all the necessary support during project implementation by placing at their disposal the relevant information concerning experiences and developments in other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean or in other parts of the world.

33. It should be emphasised that the service has contributed to strengthening the flow of co-operation between the countries of the region. The National Apprenticeship Service in Colombia, as well as the National Council for Technical Education in Argentina, the National Service of Industrial Apprenticeship in Brazil, and the National Institute of Educational Co-operation in Venezuela have signed mutual co-operation agreements as well as with most of the other national training institutions in the region. Thanks to CINTERFOR, these agreements have multiplied over the years and have become a contributing factor of regional unity. In the spirit of reciprocity, they have helped put all countries on an equal footing and replace the notions of "donor" and "beneficiary" in assistance by the wider conception of co-operation. At present, it is generally recognised that every country may learn from others, and that all have an interest in both giving and receiving, since exchange is mutually beneficial.

B. The Asian and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP)

34. APSDEP was created by a resolution made during the Conference of Asian Labour Ministers (Seoul, 1971) which asked the ILO to undertake a study of the technical and financial possibilities of implementing a regional vocational skill development programme, as well as of governments' willingness to contribute to its support. After a first round of consultations, the ILO and the UNDP despatched a joint mission to a dozen countries of the region, the report of which was communicated to all governments in the area. Since the reaction to the report's conclusions was favourable, the Conference of the Asian Labour Ministers (meeting again in Melbourne in 1975), adopted a new resolution requesting the ILO to implement the programme as soon as the conditions were appropriate.

35. In 1977, the Director-General of the International Labour Office decided to finance an initial phase of work which led to the convocation of a preparatory general meeting. It was held in Islamabad in September 1978 with the participation of 19 countries. Also present were the representatives of workers' and employers' organisations of the ILO's Governing Body, of the UNDP and of other international organisations. As a result of the agreements arising from this meeting, the programme began its activities in 1979.

36. APSDEP's objectives are to promote the study of vocational and technical training policies; the exchange of information about current experiences in the countries of the region; the improvement of decision-making and other crucial skills of the training staff; and, finally, to serve as a mechanism to facilitate technical co-operation between all the member countries.

37. In order to meet these objectives, APSDEP committed itself to undertaking the following tasks: (a) to contribute to the creation of a network connecting the training bodies of the countries in the region; (b) to organise and promote meetings between training specialists in order to favour direct exchanges of information and experience; (c) to serve as a channel of communication between the countries of the region and the organisations and institutions of other regions in the world; and (d) to promote the creation of national documentation services in the field of vocational and technical training.

38. The organisation of APSDEP's headquarters, which is based in Islamabad, is similar to that of CINTERFOR. The director of the programme is appointed by the Director-General of the ILO. A Technical Committee composed of government representatives, workers' and employers' representatives chosen by the respective national organisations, meets every year to establish the content of the programme of activities, taking into account the financial resources necessary for its implementation. The programme's budget is composed of contributions from the ILO and the UNDP; to these are added cash contributions from the governments of certain countries, such as the Netherlands and Japan, as well as contributions in kind from the countries of the region that participate in the implementation of projects that have been approved by the Technical Committee.

39. At present, the programme's activities are centred on the following areas: (a) establishment of a network of documentation centres; (b) planning and evaluation of training; (c) promotion of rural training; (d) preparation and exchange of teaching materials; (e) definition of occupations and skill certification; (f) systems of apprenticeship; (g) training of supervisory staff; and (h) training for women workers and other groups with special needs.

C. The Inter-African Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CIADFOR)

40. Over the past few years, a number of African countries have worked together to carry out a number of vocational training activities. For example, trainers and instructors from Mauritania were admitted to the Further Training Centre in Dakar, where they acquired complementary skills. Some countries have opened their vocational training centres to the African liberation movements; Tanzania, in particular, welcomed and trained a number of candidates in accordance with agreements signed with the ANC (African National Congress) and with the PAC (Pan Africanist Congress). Egypt has also received trainees from the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), particularly in the Wardan Railway Training Centre, where they followed specialised courses, mainly on signalling. Similar activities have been conducted in Zambia, especially in the field of commercial training.

41. It was in 1978, when the Inter-African Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CIADFOR) started its activities, that technical co-operation between developing countries in the field of vocational training was really launched in Africa. A short time before, the ILO Fifth Regional Conference of African States, had been held in Abidjan and the subject of "education for development" had been discussed. The debate showed that a great deal of importance was attached to the development of vocational training and the need for all African countries to mobilise the entirety of their resources in this field. CIADFOR was born from this awareness on the part of a number of African countries, who wished to approach vocational training matters by co-ordinating their efforts, in such a way as to enable each country to benefit from its neighbours' experience. CIADFOR's present membership includes Benin, Burundi, the United Republic of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta and Zaire.

42. The criteria applied by CIADFOR to choose its activities are worth noting. This choice is governed by the interest shown by member governments in particular problems; that is to say, that action taken should meet the needs of a number of member countries, or include those activities whose joint implementation would engender savings or results qualitatively higher than those to be expected if each country had worked alone.

43. This practical approach has exerted a certain influence on the development of CIADFOR. In fact, the work of the Centre is carried out by different members, in particular by the member country which offers to take responsibility for a given task, with the collaboration of technicians from the countries wishing to participate. The work is therefore decentralised, which apart from being stimulating for the member countries and procuring for them a feeling of useful participation, further motivates them by the multinational impact of their work.

44. During the four-year period of TCDC activities in the field of vocational training, CIADFOR's work has resulted in a number of interesting achievements. For example, in the field of "training policies and programmes", the relationship between training and employment was the subject of specific surveys carried out in the Congo, the Ivory Coast, Niger, Senegal and Zaire. In order to become better acquainted with the vocational training structures in the different member countries, CIADFOR conducted a survey based

on questionnaires, the results of which were used for the publication, in 1981, of a Directory of Vocational Training Institutes. This document contains information on vocational training institutions and services in 16 countries, and gives details of legal frameworks, structures, objectives, fields of action, financial resources, future development projects and, last but not least, relationships with other institutions.

45. Employers' and workers' organisations in CIADFOR member countries have participated in several fields of activity. Thus, two parallel studies were carried out, one of employers' organisations of the United Republic of Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Zaire and the other of workers' organisations in Gabon, Senegal, Togo and Zaire. These two studies served to identify the mechanisms through which the said organisations are associated and participate in the vocational training process in the different countries visited.

46. Work on teaching methods led to the publication of a set of teaching materials known as "CIADFOR's Basic Collection" (CBC). The first part of this task, completed in 1980, was the preparation of a standard document containing guidelines for the development and exchange of the teaching materials. Since then, basic collections have been issued for the following groups of trades: automobile mechanics, building, wood-working, diesel engines and automobile electricity. Zaire is now preparing a further CBC for maintenance mechanics, while Senegal is doing one for steel construction.

47. The CIADFOR Bulletin, 32 issues of which have already been published has become the most important means of disseminating information on co-operation activities between African countries carried out under the auspices of the Centre; present circulation has now reached 1,000 copies. CIADFOR has also organised a documentation centre whose activities are manifold, since it is in charge of collecting the documentation required for the whole programme, managing and developing the stock and ensuring a regular flow of information exchange with the documentation centres of CINTERFOR, APSDEP and the national vocational training documentation centres from different countries.

48. To sum up progress made by African countries in this field, it is important to remember that different kinds of TCDC activities in the field of vocational training have been implemented by these countries for a number of years. To begin with they were conducted independently, and then, as of 1978, TCDC activities were made considerably easier by the existence of CIADFOR's organisational framework. This trend is to be further reinforced in the future, since vocational training opens many doors to co-operation between developing countries.

III. FACTORS FAVOURABLE OR UNFAVOURABLE TO TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (TCDC) IN THE FIELD OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

49. There are many factors which facilitate or hinder TCDC in the field of vocational training. They cannot be easily classified because the influence which they exert in different countries changes according to the development levels achieved, development policies pursued, identified needs and technical skills available.

50. One of the technical factors which are favourable to TCDC is the evolution of vocational training systems. Originally, these systems tended to copy those of industrialised countries. However, a large number of developing countries gradually began to question the ability of these systems to provide for their own vocational training needs. Acknowledgement of this fact led to the introduction of reforms - and even to the establishment of entirely new systems - which catered specifically to their particular development needs. This similarity of thought on main concerns, combined with the number of vocational training needs to be met and the desire to find adequate technical solutions, are all positive factors in promoting technical co-operation between developing countries.

51. Another positive element lies in the fact that vocational training, far from being solely the concern of governments, is also the concern of employers and workers. Governments think of it as part and parcel of their development policies; managers are aware of the fact that skilled workers make for higher productivity and quality products; finally, workers and their unions are convinced that good vocational qualifications are the best way to get a job, to keep it during periods of recession, or to secure a promotion. This interest in vocational training is to be found not only in individual countries, but also at regional or international meetings. TCDC in the field of vocational training is thereby highly facilitated, especially when governments, employers and workers agree to adopt resolutions whose application they supervise.

52. The development of vocational training is an on-going process, since whatever the standard of the established systems or of the training given, progress continues and thus forces nations to foresee change and to adapt themselves to it. The permanent character of vocational training, and the improvements which must be introduced in this field, justify the use of TCDC mechanisms.

53. The existence of a specific organisational structure is essential if TCDC activities are to evolve. This is one of the most important facts to come out of the increase in regional co-operation in Africa, Latin America and Asia since the creation of CIADFOR, CINTERFOR and APSDEP.

54. Obstacles to the implementation of TCDC can be found in situations contrary to those which have just been described. For example, differing levels of development can generate a certain amount of reticence in those countries with poor training facilities, which may discourage them if they feel that they are unable to make contributions comparable to those of other countries. Or they may be afraid of finding themselves obliged to adopt solutions far beyond the technical and financial limits of their country, thus causing a withdrawal. However, the experience of the three regional centres has shown that the actual practice of co-operation, has allowed them to avoid this type of negative reaction.

55. Other non-vocational training elements may also hinder the implementation of TCDC. First, the absence, in many countries, of a legal structure or of regulations to encourage the exchange of trainees or specialists. Secondly, the shortage of housing facilities in vocational training centres, which can well impede the admission of foreigners on fellowships.

56. There is another equally important element, i.e. the need for each country to be aware of what training possibilities exist, or do not exist, in each of the other countries with which co-operation is envisaged. The improvement of information within individual countries is essential if this form of co-operation is to thrive. It stands to reason that once data have been collected, they should be analysed and processed in order to reach the people who are to use them. Once again, this has been understood by the three regional centres, all of which attach great importance to the creation of documentation services, both at the regional and national levels.

57. When reviewing the obstacles to co-operation between developing countries, mention should be also made of financial problems. Co-operation activities in the field of vocational training imply the organisation of working parties calling for expenses which many countries are unable to assume. Consequently, there is a need not only to equitably share the costs of co-operation between participating countries, but also to underline the need to secure contributions from bodies in charge of financing co-operation programmes for development, in order not to jeopardise the future of TCDC.

IV. MEASURES FOR THE REINFORCEMENT OF TCDC

58. The reinforcement of technical co-operation between developing countries in the field under consideration depends primarily on each interested country and on the effort they are ready to make for the benefit of the regional or sub-regional group in which they participate. As a result, it seems indispensable to install, at the national level, systems which will facilitate the exchange of vocational training specialists, experts and trainees on fellowship. An equivalent effort would be necessary to increase the national ability to analyse those problems which the country must face, and to build up the appropriate structures in order to impart training adapted to specific needs.

59. Another highly important element, is the identification and mobilisation of human and material resources attached to vocational training which might be applied to the implementation of TCDC activities. In a way this is linked to the substantial efforts which should be made as regards information on vocational training, and addressed to potential users. In this connection, it is important to give high priority to the establishment of documentation centres on vocational training integrated with the national training bodies.

60. TCDC can only expand if every country accepts responsibility for the implementation of specific activities at both the sub-regional and regional levels. This desire for co-operation, if it is to be effective, should be embodied in down-to-earth activities which, beyond providing meeting grounds for people involved in this task, must produce useful results.

61. TCDC experience in vocational training in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific demonstrates the need for an organisational framework adapted to its objectives and to the capacity of the countries of each region, bearing in mind that it can be implemented by stages. The regulations of this organisational framework can be developed according to the environmental conditions and to the scope of the programmes agreed upon by the member countries. However, in order to fulfil its role effectively, the organisational framework must include a device which allows the participating countries to decide on the programme of activities so that, in return, they unequivocally commit themselves to participating actively in its implementation.

62. If this enterprise is to succeed, it is important that all the countries concerned contribute to it, in cash or in kind, according to their means, and that these contributions be determined in as realistic a manner as possible. To begin with, therefore, they can be made solely in kind, the training bodies of the member countries being responsible for carrying out specific projects in which the other countries are involved.

63. Furthermore, in order to effectively develop TCDC in the three regions, regional centres such as CIADFOR, CINTERFOR and APSDEP must have outside assistance, both financial and technical, at their disposal. This kind of outside assistance, specifically intended for vocational training TCDC, must be sought from the traditional financial sources of international co-operation, whether bilateral or multilateral. Clearly, outside assistance will be more easily obtained if the countries involved show that vocational training TCDC is very high on their list of priorities while taking initiatives and accepting responsibilities proportionate to their means.

V. FINAL REMARKS

64. Much can be learned from this regional vocational training experience led by APSDEP, CIADFOR and CINTERFOR. Study of the factors that favour or hinder vocational training TCDC seems to show that the positive factors are both more numerous and powerful than the negative zones.

65. The activities undertaken in the three regions, and the results obtained, show that the TCDC satisfies real needs in the field of vocational training. This type of co-operation can stimulate the implementation of activities that cannot be undertaken by one country alone. Moreover, by taking part in such joint endeavours the talents and expertise of national specialists can be enhanced, which in itself is an important contribution to achieving individual and collective self-reliance.

66. In Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, vocational training would appear to be an eminently suitable field for the implementation of activities in which several countries can participate. This is no doubt due to political, social and cultural characteristics, but also to the crucial importance of the programmes devoted to up-grading the qualifications of the labour force of developing countries. Vocational training is, moreover, a vast field in which the needs of developing countries are enormous; the co-operation between them doubtless satisfies some of these needs economically and efficiently, with advantages for each of the countries involved.

67. This form of co-operation is not incompatible with traditional international co-operation: both of them benefit from working together and a multiplier effect is evident when they are complementary. The TCDC developed by APSDEP, CIADFOR and CINTERFOR, far from causing countries to isolate themselves, has created the conditions for a situation that transcends the continents involved. In fact, the countries that practise TCDC are therefore in a position to be full partners in world-wide co-operation.

68. Besides, TCDC deserves to be more widely developed and strengthened as a means to encourage and support the original local training approaches and to foster solidarity practices in the areas of training. To this end, the will of developing countries themselves does not suffice. It further requires that this will be supported by the international development financial sources.

69. The ILO itself has spared no effort to make TCDC in the field of vocational training a reality in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific. The regional centres established in each of these continents have become, in the space of a few years, powerful instruments of a horizontal co-operation that expands and enriches other forms of international co-operation. The ILO provides this support, in the first place, to satisfy specific requests from countries that wish to become involved in this type of co-operation and, in the second place, to comply with the resolutions adopted by its Governing Body and by the International Labour Conference in the field of co-operation for development. These resolutions recommend an approach that favours the efforts made by developing countries to achieve national and collective self-reliance in the field of human resources development.